

Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-18. (Cancelled)

Claim 19. (Previously presented) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol.

Claim 20. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of Claim 19~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

Claims 21-22. (Cancelled)

Claim 23. (Previously presented) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol.

Claim 24. (Previously presented) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol.

Claims 25-36. (Cancelled)

Claim 37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

Claim 38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

Claim 39. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 19~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-cysteinylglycine.

Claim 40. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 19~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

Claim 41. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 19~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

Claim 42. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 41~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

Claim 43. (Previously presented) A method for increasing biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising nitric oxide.

Claim 44. (Previously presented) A method for increasing biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising ethyl nitrite.

Claim 45. (Currently amended) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 23~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

Claim 46. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

Claim 47. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

Claim 48. (Currently amended) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 23~~, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-cysteinylglycine.

Claim 49. (Currently amended) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 23,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

Claim 50. (Currently amended) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 23,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

Claim 51. (Currently amended) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values, in isolated blood said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 50,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

Claim 52. (Previously presented) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values in isolated blood, said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising nitric oxide.

Claim 53. (Previously presented) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values in isolated blood, said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising ethyl nitrite.

Claim 54. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 24,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

Claim 55. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

Claim 56. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

Claim 57. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 24,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-cysteinylglycine.

Claim 58. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 24,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

Claim 59. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 24,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

Claim 60. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol ~~The method of claim 59,~~ wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

Claim 61. (Previously presented) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with composition comprising nitric oxide.

Claim 62. (Previously presented) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with composition comprising ethyl nitrite.